THE LABOUR MONTHLY

A MAGAZINE OF INTERNATIONAL LABOUR

Editor: R. PALME DUTT

Volume 6 January, 1924 Number 1

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World of Labour :: Book Reviews

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NOTES of the MONTH

The Test—Seeing It Through—Tasks and Problems—Propaganda or Achievement—No Veiled Coalition—Unemployment the Issue —What of Maintenance ?—What of Work ?—Where is the Money ?—The Only Way—Unity First

THE greatest test so far has come to the working-class movement of this country. With startling suddenness the whole question of a Labour Government and all that it involves has come to the forefront. Within a few weeks of the writing of this a Labour Government may have been formed. The issues raised by this are tremendous and urgent, and there is little enough preparedness for them. Every step and act now will have an historic responsibility for a long period to come. Whether the proposed Labour Government is actually formed or not (and at present it looks as if the bourgeoisie is preparing to accept it as the least of many evils) there can be no question that with the results of the election just held a new period has been opened. Real politics have begun. The old controversies, the old pioneering work of preparation, the old discussions and speculations and debating performances are over. The struggle for power is here.

THE struggle for power is here, and there can be no end to it until victory is complete and secure. From henceforth a definite, concrete object is placed before the whole working class to unify its endeavours and call forth its most supreme purpose. That object is not this or that particular measure, not this or that sectional or limited aim; the object is Power itself, the Power of Government and the State, Power to mould the world anew and bring in a workers' society. Once that grand object is firmly printed in the minds of all the workers, is made vivid to all by the struggle now opening, and is stamped in their very being by the episodes of its unfolding fortunes, then the workers will have awakened to a new consciousness which will overcome all their

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present difficulties and despondencies and carry them forward to irresistible triumph. Whatever the stages that will have to be gone through, whatever the defeats and setbacks, whatever the shedding of illusions and dropping of false hopes, that struggle, once entered on, will have to be carried through. It is not the port of a voyage that is being entered into with the first Labour Government nor with the second, but the beginning of a struggle whose magnitude is still hardly guessed at by most. Therefore the first need for all of us at the present moment, whatever our differences, whatever our criticisms and distrusts, is to unite in support of a Workers' Government and its supremacy first and foremost, and to exert all our forces one and all to fight on its behalf foursquare against the whole capitalist world.

THE conditions under which the first Workers' Government is likely to be formed are of exceptional difficulty. All normal imaginings have calculated on the assumption of entering on to power on the basis of a definite majority and proceeding to tackle the problems of administration. To-day the situation is wholly different. The problem of the Labour Government is not an administrative, nor even a legislative, problem. It is a tactical problem. The Labour Government is to be entered into for a single purpose—to prepare the way. The normal anticipations have, in fact, been forestalled, not because the majority has been achieved sooner than expected, but because it has become understood that the formation of a Labour Government itself may only be a stage in tactics in a continuous struggle. The coming Labour Government, if it is formed, may be able to effect certain definite things, such as the recognition of Russia, even though it lasts only the shortest time. But in the main it will only exist to prepare for the next General Election.

SHOULD our object be Propaganda or Achievement in a Labour Government under such conditions? This question is sometimes asked, but the question is wrongly stated. It assumes a pair of alternatives neither of which exist. It assumes on the one

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hand the possibility of a solid achievement which the circumstances preclude. This is just the path along which Liberal capitalist "friends" would like to tempt the Labour Party, knowing that it would under such circumstances be in their power. It is the *Manchester Guardian* which expatiates on "the immense opportunities which Labour may now have of carrying a whole series of constructive reforms and proving itself to be a party capable in a high degree of governing, and worthy as such of the confidence of the country." This fine talk deceives no one as to the basis of Liberal dependence which is intended by it. On the other hand, to lay down propaganda as the object is to suggest a kind of negative desire to accomplish nothing because the desired majority is not there. These two alternatives equally do not express the issue, which is a real one, as to the line a Labour Government under the present circumstances should adopt. A more exact expression needs to be found.

WHAT is the issue which has to be settled with regard to a Labour Government on a minority basis? That issue may be simply and clearly expressed. It is whether to look for capitalist support or working-class support. Any attempt to calculate in terms of what will be accepted and go through is in practice to court the deciding support of the capitalist representatives. It is obvious that any such position is impossible for a Labour Government, and above all one which is trying to establish its position for the future with the working-class electorate. It is one thing to make use of existing divisions, lines of policy, election pledges, &c., in the capitalist ranks in order to take advantage of them. It is another to be dependent on such a basis for the character of the programme to be put forward on fundamental issues. Such a suggestion cannot be entertained. It is only a veiled form of coalition. A Labour Government must proclaim a working-class programme and build on working-class support, not only for the sake of the present, but still more for the sake of the future. This does not mean to raise some sudden disruption as a grand total of activity. But it does mean to put forward a positive programme—what to do in the present situation and how to do it.

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IT is here that arises the real practical problem. The issue on which a Labour Government will stand or fall is one and one alone—Unemployment. All the other issues are by comparison easily outlined, and raise no special questions at this moment. Housing cannot immediately be more than a question of a scheme, even though rents call for attention at once. Foreign policy, apart from the recognition of Russia, cannot yield immediate results. Democratic reform—universal suffrage, the abolition of the House of Lords, &c.—should certainly be put in hand, though it cannot occupy the forefront of attention. But Unemployment brooks no waiting. The unemployed are there, two millions of them, suffering daily on miserable pittances, many of them in receipt of nothing, hundreds of thousands falling outside the scope of insurance or cheated of anything by one or another of a hundred devices, those in receipt struggling to exist on scales which consider five shillings a week sufficient for a man's wife and one shilling a week for his child. The *Daily Herald* Commissioner has been describing vividly enough the lives of those actually adrift. What is a Labour Government to mean to all these people? What can it offer to their anxiety and hopes? That is the question of questions for a Labour Government.

A LABOUR Government on a minority cannot be expected to show easy successful action or immediate results straight away. That must be recognised, and there will be patient understanding of the position on the part of the workers. But a Labour Government must show a real programme to deal with unemployment and readiness to fight on that programme. What is that programme? This is the question that must be answered. What in practical terms is the Labour policy on unemployment? The old slogan has been Work or Maintenance. But that slogan will now have to be defined. What work? What maintenance? How is it to be provided? Take first the question of maintenance, since it is clear that work cannot be provided at once for two million people. What is to be the maintenance scale? What the conditions? It is universally agreed, and has been a commonplace of Labour platforms, that the present scale is impossible. But what is the

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Labour scale? The last figure officially adopted was that at the Special Emergency Conference on Unemployment at the Kingsway Hall. There the figure was 25s. for a single man and 40s. for a married couple. Does that resolution still hold? Or is the figure the National Unemployed figure? No matter what the figure, any attempt at improvement raises at once one question. A great deal of money will be required. Even supposing it is considered impossible actually to deal with the existing rates at present, it will be manifestly necessary as a minimum to end the gap, review the exceptions, provide in some way for the uninsured, and in fact afford some real national all-in basis of provision, however scanty, for the unemployed in place of the present mockery. But this will require financial provision which does not at present exist.

IF we turn to the question of Work, the problem is even more acute. The existing proposals of the Trades Facilities Act, acceleration of Government orders, and even schemes of afforestation, &c., can clearly absorb only a small proportion of the unemployed. And these also will require money. But if anything serious is to be attempted, if vast national schemes are to be undertaken to absorb even the greater proportion of two million unemployed, then a tremendous volume of money will be required. Baldwin's fifty millions—in any case hypothetical—was laughed out of court as a pitiful drop in a bucket to deal with the unemployed, covering at most, even on the most optimistic figures, perhaps a couple of hundred thousand of the unemployed. It is clear that, if serious provision is to be made, even on a conservative estimate, something very much nearer a thousand millions would be wanted.

WHERE is the money to come from? That is the root question for a Labour Government. Everything turns on this. If Baldwin only offered fifty millions, and that imaginary, for unemployment, it was not because he was unaware that a hundred millions would be at any rate twice as popular and two hundred millions four times as popular, but because he did not know where to raise it. Where will the Labour Government raise it? From revenue? There is little enough to be raised in the way of cutting expenditure that has not been tried already, so long as

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the sacred mountain of the debt is left untouched, and even the cutting of armaments, unless carried out with a pacifist recklessness that is improbable, will not yield anything much. The Capital Levy is ruled out. In any case it was only intended for debt redemption. The interest saved by debt redemption will not be available, as it has already been promised for other purposes. Even if it were taken the figure would not amount, assuming a capital levy of three thousand millions, to more than one hundred and fifty millions at the best, from which half would have to be deducted for loss of revenue, leaving a figure of seventy or eighty millions, probably promised already several times over for the reduction of income tax, abolition of corporation profits duty, repeal of all food taxes, and ending of the entertainments duty. Besides, the capital levy is admittedly placed on the shelf by the present political situation. What remains? The only suggestion is a Loan. A great National Development Loan is proposed to raise the necessary finance. What serious prospect is there of this? It would mean a tremendous loan comparable with the great war loans, raised only under the supreme capitalist stimulus of war. What equal stimulus is there now? A high rate of interest? But from a Government which openly professes the Capital Levy as a means of wiping out the payment of interest on debt! No doubt the bankers will be so innocent as not to think of this. Or perhaps they will be eager to produce money in hundreds of millions for expenditure a great part of which must be unproductive in an immediate commercial sense. Perhaps patriotism will move them? No doubt the City of London will fall over itself to make a Labour Government's scheme a success, as Premier Theodore could relate. Or perhaps the security will tempt them? The security of a Labour Government which is admittedly in existence on sufferance perhaps only for a few weeks. The whole conception is remote from any actuality, and to entertain it seriously is to court failure.

WHAT, then, is to be done? Neither taxation, nor the capital levy, nor a loan can solve the problem—the fundamental problem which faces a Labour Government. We believe that the plain facts of the case show, and will

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increasingly show to all the movement, that there is only one thing to be done—and that is to establish control of the banks and banking credit. Either the Government must control the banks or the banks will control the Government. A Labour Government which has to come begging to its enemies, the great financial interests, for permission to carry out its schemes on their terms is a pathetic spectacle. Which in that case is the real Government of the country —the Labour Cabinet on its knees or the banks with the whip in their hand. A Labour Government must be a real Government or nothing, the unquestioned sovereign authority in the land. The credit is there, waiting to be used and needing to be used for the great productive and social purposes into which a Labour Government would wish to direct it. All that is needed is the determination of the Labour Government and the working class behind them that it shall be so used and no monopoly interests shall be allowed to stand in the way. The same applies, and will be found increasingly with every piece of experience to apply, to every field of industry. Not bargaining with the capitalist interests, not hole-and-corner schemes of a canal here and a bridge there by gracious permission of the capitalist rulers while leaving them in unchallenged possession of the great monopolist industries they are unable to run, but State control of all the great industries of the country by a Labour Government with the full backing of the working class through every pit and factory—that is the only weapon to deal with the present economic situation of the country.

THIS is a practical question. There is no wish at this moment to endeavour to force alternative programmes or issues upon a Labour Government or to complicate its path or embarrass its support. But these issues are bound to arise, and they will have to be faced. It is not a question of particular policies or principles. It is a question of how the thing is to be done. And the sense of the danger if what is proposed or attempted should fall short through lack of recognition of these questions, and if in consequence a wave of disillusionment or disbelief should pass through the masses and ruin the movement that has been built up, compels the earliest and most urgent attention now. But, lest there

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be any misunderstanding, let this be said at once. Whatever the programme adopted, whatever the measures and proposals, so long as the Labour Government stands clear for independent Labour, for the organised working-class movement against the capitalist parties, then the first duty of all is to support it, no matter whether they agree with its programme or not, because the formation and the battle of a Labour Government is the first beginning of the struggle of the whole working class against capitalism.

R. P. D.

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TOWARDS A NEW POLICY

By W. H. HUTCHINSON

THE issues of the General Election and the Parliamentary crisis have temporarily obscured from view the problems of the organised working-class movement revealed by the Plymouth Trades Union Congress. Nevertheless, these problems have to be faced, and the sooner the better.

There is no question that the present position of the organised movement is very serious. The movement is weaker than it has been for a considerable time passed; the conditions of the workers are very bad; there is very great confusion of policy and action; and there is a marked discontent inside the membership with what is felt to be a failure of the existing leadership. I know very much can be said to counterbalance these points, but these facts need to be faced, and it is better to face them frankly at the outset and consider what needs to be done.

What are the causes that are responsible for the present weakness? It is possible to set down a variety of causes, all of them having their measure of truth.

It is often said that the present position is simply a reflection of the economic situation and trade depression. The trade depression has led to cuts in wages. Lower wages have created discontent and diminishing numbers. The exhaustion of union funds has weakened the unions, and failure to continue benefits has sapped the confidence of many. Some have simply taken advantage of the decline to let their payments lapse.

All this is true, but it is not the whole truth. For to be satisfied with these points as the explanation of the whole position is to confess failure. A healthy movement is stimulated and strengthened by adversity to fresh endeavour, to self-criticism, to stronger organisation and preparation. It is the weakness of our own movement that is brought out by bad times. To be satisfied, therefore, with pointing to the bad times as a justification is to miss the whole meaning of the present position. It is simply to take the

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whole crisis fatalistically, and to present no policy whatever other than to wait for a possibly mythical trade revival. Such an attitude would be equivalent to a confession of bankruptcy of the whole movement.

It is necessary to look within for the weakness which we must find a way to remedy.

Now it is easy for anyone to lay a finger on a score of weaknesses of the existing organised movement. It is easy to point out the division of organisations, the multiplicity, the lack of co-ordination, the internal quarrels, the distrust between officials and the rank and file, &c., but all these are themselves only symptoms of something that is deeper.

I believe that the fundamental weakness of the existing movement is the lack of a clear common aim and objective. The movement has grown up haphazard under conditions of a day that is past; under the conditions of that time limited organisations with a limited objective could achieve marked successes for their members, and it was upon these successes that the traditions of the great skilled unions which still dominate the movement were built up.

But to-day we are thrown into a new world. The economic and political crisis let loose by the war, and intensified after the war, and the changed industrial position of Great Britain, have all affected the whole situation of the working class of this country. The skilled trades no longer occupy the peculiar position of exemption from the crisis which at present affects all workers equally.

The separate workers of separate trades have merged into the whole working class. Large world issues, issues of war, trade, prices, unemployment, the whole running of industry affect all workers equally, more intensely, and more intimately than any separate conditions of separate trades. Even in their separate day-to-day economic struggles the workers find themselves brought up, not simply against the individual employers, but against the Government and the State. They are faced with the attack of the capitalists as a class. And all the time their own outlook and organisation follows the old limited lines. In consequence, defeat is inevitable. The lack of a common class conception, which previously did not seem to matter to the practical man in the

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movement, is now seen to leave the workers helpless to fight even their every-day fight.

Thus the necessity of a new policy is forced upon the movement by the present position. The old aims and the old organisations are thrown into doubt. It becomes open to question how much longer we can hope to gain anything on the old lines ; how far there can be any improvement of wages and conditions under the economic decay of British capitalism. If we are to go forward at all, we have to be ready—a united force with a positive policy of advance against capitalism. It is clear that here we are concerned with something more than mending this or that in our machinery. A new aim and a new outlook is required, in accordance with which we must re-model our whole movement.

The old movement is trying to go on without any adaptation to new conditions; that is the secret of the present position. The consequences of that position are to be seen alike in the defeats and weakness of the movement, and in the suffering and despair of the mass of the workers. These consequences, if allowed to continue unchecked, are so serious as to compel every responsible reader who feels conscious of the position to speak frankly what he sees.

What are the prospects if something is not done radically to change the position? There are two alternatives, the symptoms of both of which have already revealed themselves.

One alternative is the blind and anarchic revolt of sections of the rank and file, already shown in the growing tendency of unofficial strikes, repudiation of authority of leaders, and even break aways from the accredited organisation. These tendencies are too often treated as simply occasion for individual blame or moral exhortation to leaders of men: but they are really the symptoms of a disease which lies deeper and for which we have to find the remedy.

The other alternative is even more serious. Revolt is at any rate something positive, however confused and destructive. But the much more probable alternative is simply apathy. If hope and confidence in the unions die down and are not replaced by a new and larger hope and confidence, then we may expect to see, and deserve to see, a creeping paralysis of apathy producing decline,

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and decline in its turn producing apathy in an endless vicious circle.

These are the two alternatives in front of us if a serious attempt is not made to face the whole position and mark out the future path. Revolt or apathy—both alike are equally fatal to the future of the movement. Yet as long as we are content to leave the position as revealed at the Plymouth Congress we can hope for no other result.

A new movement has to develop within the body of trade unionism.

It is not a separate movement, or a movement for a particular scheme or formula that is wanted, but a common movement of all elements that sincerely wish to remedy the present lamentable situation and bring a revival of our forces. Such a movement must be based upon a common programme, going beyond the separate aims of separate sections, and setting out the common aims for all the workers to set before themselves.

In a future article I shall be glad to contribute to the formulation of such a programme, which should in any case represent the outcome of common consultation and discussion of representative leaders. For the present, I am concerned particularly with the steps that can be taken immediately.

From where are we to look for this new impulse, which is at the moment admittedly necessary? It is clear that, to be a healthy and vigorous one, it must come from the body of the workers themselves. But where are the forms of expression through which such a revival can find its way?

Looking round the existing field of the moment I think it is from the Trades Councils that we must look for the new impulse towards the solidarity and common action of the working class as a whole. The importance, or rather the potential importance, of the Trades Councils in the present period is still not generally realised. In the past they have been rather adjuncts to the movement than definite parts of it. But in the period that is now coming, the transitional period of working-class organisation in which we are groping our way towards the realisation of greater unity, they hold the secret of the position. For on our development of the Trades Councils depends the development of working-class unity, not merely at the top, but right throughout the movement.

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The General Council can only function effectively when it is securely supported by a basis of strong and active local organisations such as the Trades Councils. The weakness of the General Council at present is not so much its lack of formal power, as is commonly said (even if it were theoretically endowed with power it is doubtful if it would attempt to use it in the face of the real sovereignty of the great unions), but rather the lack of any conscious and organised backing throughout the movement on which it can rely. Such an effective backing the Trades Councils alone can supply.

Many Trades Councils have already made notable efforts towards enlarging the scope of their activities and developing as unifying bodies of the local movement. It has been customary to ignore or even to discourage such developments. This is a fatal mistake. Such tendencies should be encouraged and assisted along right lines. The Trades Councils can never play a great part until the district committees or other industrial authorities of the unions are ready to link up with the Trades Councils, and it is important that this should become the practice. At the same time the tradition of the Trades Councils should be regularised by their admission to the Trades Union Congress (the technical difficulties in the way of this could be overcome in various ways). There is no question here of duplicate representation, but of the representation of different capacities: on the one hand, the trade functions and national basis of the unions, on the other the reflection of the local expression of the workers without distinction of trades. Both are essential to make the Trades Union Congress a real expression of the whole movement.

The recent Birmingham Conference of Trades Councils is a significant development. It reveals the strength of the natural tendencies within the Trades Councils towards greater self-assertion and extension of their rôle. Many have felt that this development carries danger within it. There is no doubt of the danger, if the movement is allowed to grow up in separation. But the actual present policy of the conference has been confined to a strictly legitimate advocacy of a place within the Trades Union Congress and the development of the rôle of the Trades Councils as local propaganda bodies. Such a policy deserves support, and the movement should not be allowed to grow up in separation.

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At the same time as we develop the local bodies of the movement, we must deal with the question of the centre body. While all will agree that the extension of the powers of the General Council, as fast as the movement is ripe for it, is an essential step of the future, it is not the primary step. The first necessity is to overcome those difficulties and causes of friction between the leading national bodies which stand in the way of effective unification being realised. To hope to accomplish this by a long-drawn process of amalgamation is to dream an idle dream which does not realise the complexities of the situation. Were the movement being organised afresh for the first time things might be done differently. But as things are, amalgamation can only touch the fringe of the problem. What is wanted is an effective policy of demarcation clearly laid out and resolutely enforced, to make internal dissensions and confusions impossible in the future.

These, then, are the immediate steps before us that I can see:—

A common programme to unite all the most active elements in the Trade Union Movement on immediate common aims ;

Development of the Trades Councils as the local unifying bodies of the working class, with right of delegation to the Trades Union Congress ;

A demarcation policy to make an end of all cases of overlapping, confusion, competing organisations, &c.

In putting forward these propositions, I am conscious that it is not possible to do more in an introductory article than to touch on the outskirts of a very large field. The actual proposals that may be made are at the moment less important than the realisation that such proposals must be forthcoming. It is rather with a view to opening up the whole subject than to making any claim to lay down what should or should not be done that I have put forward these considerations on the whole position of the movement for the serious attention of all who have the future of the movement at heart, and in doing so I shall be glad to hear of contributions that any may have to make on the subject.

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THE GENERAL ELECTION AND BRITISH FOREIGN POLICY

By R. PALME DUTT

THE results of the British General Election are likely to mean a change in the whole international situation. British and French reaction have been the firm basis on which European reaction was built. That basis is now shaking, and the election results reveal its approaching fall.

Internally, the results mean that Britain is no longer in proud and secure isolation unshaken by the currents agitating Europe, but that Britain is now reduced to the same situation of chronic parliamentary crisis, party deadlocks, shifting combinations, and all the time the growing working-class challenge. Britain is made part of Europe and social and revolutionary politics begin in Britain.

Externally, the results are immediately even more important. The whole fabric of British foreign and imperial policy is profoundly shaken and an entirely new set of forces is likely to come into play. How immediate will be the changes will depend on conditions: but there is no doubt that a change of immense significance for European history is about to take place. The full force of this change affecting the whole line of development of world capitalism demands to be understood in relation to the whole position of British capitalism after the war.

British Capitalism After the War

British capitalism has been in a position of extreme difficulty since the war. The triumphant crushing of the hated German rival, and the apparent establishment of the British Empire on a basis of undreamt of strength, very soon turned out to be a barren victory. In the place of the German rival, two new rivals were found to have arisen, each more formidable and unyielding than the German: on the one hand, the French hegemony of Europe;

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on the other, the American hegemony of the world. At the same time the British Empire was weakened by internal divisions and the growing strength and independence of the Dominions.

In consequence, since the war, immediately after the elation of the boom of prosperity that first succeeded to the war and then burst like a bubble, the British bourgeoisie has been engaged in a desperate struggle in four great spheres.

First, in relation to the Empire and the world leadership of finance.

Second, in relation to the Empire and the formidable disruptive tendencies within it.

Third, in relation to France and the leadership of Europe and the Near East.

Fourth, in relation to the Labour Movement at home and the threat of revolutionary tendencies.

In three of these spheres—America, the Empire, and the Labour Movement—the bourgeoisie has succeeded for the moment in maintaining its position at a heavy cost. In the fourth, Europe, it has failed.

In relation to America, Britain has succeeded in maintaining its financial credit at a terrific cost, though the old financial hegemony and the old naval supremacy is lost. The pound still keeps near the level of the dollar, though of late months it has begun to fall. The price has been the ruinous debt settlement, involving the payment of thirty millions a year tribute for sixty years and the stagnation of British industry paralysed by dear money and resultant high export prices, and consequently now beginning to rebel and demand the path of inflation.

In relation to the Empire, the governing financial groups and military bureaucracy have succeeded in suppressing the universal war of revolt that swept through all the subject millions and in reaching some kind of an accommodation, however limited and insecure, with the growing self-assertion of the colonial bourgeoisie. The highest point of disruption was reached in the Chanak crisis, when some of the Dominions refused to answer the call of the London Government for war, and in the American-Canadian Treaty immediately after, which was signed with the deliberate exclusion of Britain. The patched-up settlement, based on no common

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positive policy, but only on an undefined negative unity, and the immediate concession of limited economic and financial advantages, was reached at the Imperial Conference which has just concluded.

In relation to the Labour Movement, the ruthless capitalist offensive, which has cut wages by 50 per cent. and brought down standards far below the intolerable pre-war conditions, has succeeded with such fatal completeness in destroying for the moment all effective opposition as to have dealt a heavy blow to British industry by the virtual annihilation of the home market, with the result that a considerable section of the employers are themselves calling for a reversal of policy. The unconscious character of the working-class movement in this country, bred in the stable conditions of British monopolist industry without knowledge of the revolutionary class struggle, and the consequent combined corruption and stupidity of the Labour bureaucracy, made the workers, despite their instincts of resistance, an easy prey for the scientific capitalist offensive. Only in the last year has the tremendous growth of the Labour Party, and the first beginnings of a serious Communist movement, brought within view once more a real approaching menace from the working class.

But in relation to Europe, the British bourgeoisie, already thus heavily occupied in other directions, has met with complete and unmitigated failure.

Britain versus *France*

French diplomacy rapidly seized the character of the post-war period: the rule of military and economic force, the collapse of democracy, the dominance of the issue of revolution and counter-revolution, and the possibility, through the union of counter-revolution and the ruthless subordination of all normal prudential considerations to one objective, of the establishment of an economic, military, and political hegemony in Europe.

By the occupation of German territory and the assiduous demoralisation of the German Government and the establishment of a ring of client States beyond Germany France could establish effective control of almost all the coal and iron resources and a great proportion of the railways of Central Europe. By judicious subsidies and military missions, she could establish financial and strategic

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leadership of the new States. On this basis she could establish a virtual dictatorship in Europe, based on a series of subordinate petty dictatorships, such as to-day, when it is complete, constitutes a system of power unparalleled in European history since the Napoleonic times—and with this difference from that period, that whereas the Napoleonic system was a system of the revolutionary bourgeoisie, unchaining the forces of bourgeois nationalism in Europe, this is a system of the bourgeoisie in decay, laying its dead hand upon the rising forces of the proletariat.

Against this system, the growth of which was viewed by British eyes with growing apprehension, the British Government found itself powerless to intervene, because it had no weapon. The only effective course for Britain to contest the French system in Europe was open alliance with Germany and Russia. But the British ruling class shrank from such association with the latent and actual forces of revolution and the class consequences that such a union might bring throughout Europe. Britain remained tied to the heels of France in more and more unwilling partnership.

The most versatile of British politicians, Lloyd George, increasingly recognised the necessity of such a course. He gave signs of this recognition at a very early period after the Armistice, and finally in 1922, when British industry was already in a desperate position, he staked all upon the attempt in the Genoa Conference. But the mass of British bourgeois opinion, not yet equally alive to the realities of what was happening on the Continent, was hostile to the attempt. He failed, partly through the obstacles placed in the way by the French Government, partly through the concealed opposition of the Conservative forces on whose support he had to rely. When this failure was followed by the still more resounding failure in the Near East through the victory of Turkish Nationalist arms over the British protégé, Greece, Lloyd George fell. The Conservatives took over the Government under Bonar Law with Curzon continuing as Foreign Minister, now no longer under the very interfering thumb of Lloyd George.

Conservative Policy

The new Conservative Government immediately revised the whole Lloyd George - Balfour foreign policy. Through the

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Chancellor of the Exchequer, Baldwin, they effected an immediate unconditional settlement of the American debt on terms that aroused bitter and indignant comment even from its negotiators, without any attempt to use it as a bargaining weapon in relation to the European situation and inter-Allied debts and reparations. This was a surrender, out of which Lloyd George made heavy capital in the election campaign.

At the same time, in relation to France, the threatened Ruhr occupation, which Lloyd George had staved off so far by protracted diplomacy, alternating with threats, was at once passively allowed to take place to the accompaniment of mild expressions of benevolent neutrality and polite agreement to differ on the part of Bonar Law.

In place of these directions of policy, the Conservative Government, and particularly Curzon, yielded themselves up to their most cherished objective—war on Russia. All forces were concentrated on this objective and a tremendous propaganda campaign prepared: but the skill of the Soviet diplomacy robbed them of this prey.

In consequence, within a few months the Conservative Government found themselves faced with failure in all fields of their foreign policy. In Western Europe all initiative was surrendered to France, thus destroying British credit in Germany. In the Near East the Lausanne Conference witnessed the humiliating surrender by Curzon of Britain's traditional rights and privileges to the Turkish Nationalists they had despised. The offensive against Russia crumbled to nothing, and the representative Rakovsky had to be received, even though the fastidious Curzon refused to meet in person the hated symbol of Russian success.

British prestige had now fallen to a low ebb. Defeat followed defeat. Italy, the faithful barometer of European politics, turned against Britain and openly defied her over Greece and the occupation of Corfu. Britain tried vainly to invoke the League of Nations, only to the disastrous discrediting of both. Never, it was currently commented, had British authority in foreign policy fallen so low since the days of Charles II.

The Premier, Bonar Law, was an invalid cruising in foreign waters to recover his failing health. His successor, Baldwin, was a new man without experience or authority. Curzon was—Curzon.

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By August the menace to British industry through the French occupation of the Ruhr was so serious that the British Government attempted to take action. A Note was dispatched, informing France of the illegality of her action and its certain failure, threatening separate action by Britain, and reminding her of the debt on which no interest had been paid.

This attempt came to nothing. Whatever the causes, which are still obscure, whether through pressure of the Conservative forces at home, or uncertainty as to the next step to be taken, or expectation of the impending French success in the Ruhr and hopes of participation, Baldwin met Poincaré and publicly " made it up " with him on no basis whatever.

Immediately after came the German surrender and the French victory, which recently received its culmination in the agreement with the German industrialists. British attention now speedily forgot that it had ever officially declared the Ruhr adventure " doomed to failure " and began to concentrate on how to get a share in the proceeds.

One more attempt at intervention was made on the basis of the American President, Coolidge's, repetition of the Hughes offer for an impartial conference of inquiry on reparations. French determination, undeterred by Baldwin's pathetic entreaties to think " once, twice, and thrice," rapidly defeated this offer.

The Liberal Attack

The discomfiture of British policy was complete. The Lloyd George camp, the National Liberals, and the National Conservatives (if the latter name may be used for the Birkenhead-Chamberlain-Balfour combination that allies with Lloyd George-Churchill), as also the Independent Liberals, lost no opportunity to make capital out of this failure. Britain has suffered " a sorry rebuff," declared Lloyd George. " It is the Empire snuffed out of Europe." " It almost seems," declared Asquith, " as if Great Britain has ceased to count among the Great Powers of the world."

Liberal opinion (followed as usual by the Labour leaders) declared openly for a break with France and for association with America to win France. " Our problem," declared Keynes, " is not how to co-operate with France but how to defeat her." " We

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cannot extricate ourselves," declared the National Liberal Fisher, " without the Washington Government's aid." Lloyd George went on a triumphant tour to America invoking American aid for a war with France. " The time is coming," he declared, " when the principles of Lincoln will be fought for again. When that time comes the American and British flags will be rallying centres in that struggle." Already, months earlier, the sixty-seven Labour M.P.'s had sent their cable to America to intervene " as the one hope of saving Europe " : and resolutions against " French militarism " were the order of the day at Labour meetings.

The campaign on armaments which accompanied this war propaganda is notable. Against the Conservative policy of heavy battleships and the costly dock preparations at Singapore, obviously directed towards Empire sea routes and potential war in the Pacific with Japan and America, the Liberal campaign was all for aircraft and submarines—the two weapons in which France excelled. The old redoubtable Liberal strategists, Lord Fisher and Sir Percy Scott, pounded away at the folly of the heavy battleship and called for submarines, more submarines. Birkenhead, Lloyd George's ally in adventurist politics, specialised in the Air Peril and called for more aircraft to match France's equipment. Birkenhead also visited America on a triumphant tour, and found that " the one glimmer of hope in Europe's dark situation was the growing spirit of co-operation between the American and English peoples."

The Election Plunge

In this situation Baldwin was faced with a dilemma. He had to do something, and yet there was nothing that he could do. The Conservative policy in foreign affairs, of alliance with France, had come to a standstill, and yet the dominant forces of Conservatism still supported it, as the Plymouth Conference showed. A crisis in British industry with the fourth year of unemployment was approaching and there was no sign of a remedy. The industrialists were expressing open discontent. Working-class discontent was rising. Lloyd George was about to return from America and enter on a big offensive campaign. Every stage of delay and discrediting was playing into the hands of the Labour Party and the approaching menace of a Labour Government.

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Faced with this intractable situation, Baldwin plunged. He called a short, sharp election—to catch his opponents before they were ready. He called it nominally on tariffs ; but that this was only secondary in his mind is shown by the extreme slowness and hesitation with which he proceeded later to define what he meant by tariffs. Tariffs might be useful as a bargaining weapon against France to secure a share in the proceeds of the Ruhr; tariffs might enable something to be done towards meeting the colonies' desire for Imperial Preference; tariffs might help to fight the American Fordney tariff. In any case, tariffs afforded a line on which to hold an election and claim absolution for all his failures and mistakes. So Baldwin went to the country—while Curzon remained at the Foreign Office—" owing to the urgency of the issues."

The Liberals immediately seized on the dissolution to attack in full force, and concentrated on the failure in foreign policy. The question of Protection and Free Trade compelled, in view of past associations, a temporary split of the National Liberals from the National Conservatives, but it is already clear that this split will turn out more apparent than real. But the united Liberal manifesto spent its whole preamble on foreign policy. "Co-operation with America " was its keynote; " prompt settlement " of reparations and " full relations " with Russia. Lloyd George gave his new militant campaign full play.

" You do not want protection against French mills," he declared, " but against French militarists."

And again, " Lord Derby said last night that French statesmen preferred to deal with Baldwin. I am sure they do." (Laughter.)

And again, " Mr. Baldwin has admitted that he cannot bring peace to Europe for some years. Then let him chuck up his job and make way for someone who can."

Against this the Conservatives' spokesmen declared that they could see no intention in the Liberal programme save war with France. " From the tone of the Liberal criticism," declared the Foreign Under-Secretary, Mr. McNeill, " it is evident that if that Party is returned to power the principal effect will be a breach with France." Whether that meant an alliance with Germany he did not know. In contrast to such a policy, " I shall endeavour to

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maintain intact our friendship and alliance with those great nations by the side of whom we fought."

The Outcome of the Election

Thus the alignment of forces on the morrow of the election is for the moment comparatively simple and clear; and it is in the light of this alignment that the results are of exceptional interest.

The Conservatives stand for maintaining the French alliance while endeavouring to establish some recognition of British claims, by tariff or other means; for an anti-Russian policy; for Empire trade and development; for heavy battleships and naval bases, implying preparation for war with America. At home they stand for endeavouring to develop certain home industries by tariffs and for a hypothetical subsidy to agriculture; but in all else for a passive policy, continuing the present currency position, restricted unemployment relief, &c.

The Liberals stand for war with France, for alliance with America for this purpose; for recognition of Russia and probable alliance with Germany; for aircraft and submarines. At home they stand for the Federation of British Industries policy of inflation, or, as they term it, "a bold and courageous use of the national credit," to develop the country and the Empire as the solution for unemployment and the industrial stagnation.

In relation to these the Labour Party holds, or should hold, the key position. They alone are in a position to raise the class issue which dominates all others, to challenge the whole existing system, and to present a clear alternative. The working-class challenge and the issue of a Labour Government was the dominating issue of the election: and wherever it was to the front, all other issues of Free Trade, Protection, Liberalism, Conservatism, &c., were put in the background or openly coalesced in one bourgeois front.

But while the Labour Party is thus recognised as the representative of the working-class challenge and therefore an unknown, dangerous, and even revolutionary factor, in its actual expression it still follows its traditional policy of clinging close to Liberal lines. With the Liberals it calls for a break with France; with the Liberals it calls for the co-operation of America; with the Liberals it calls for the recognition of Russia; with the Liberals it proposes veiled

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inflation. Its only distinctive proposals, the Capital Levy—confined to the redemption of debt—and the nationalisation of mines, railways, and electric power, are not immediate and have already been recognised as practically shelved for the present.

Thus in actual practice Labour and Liberal policy on immediate issues represent a single force (despite the complete divergence of the elements they represent, which prevents coalition even though the leaders on both sides have shown themselves not ill disposed to it). Nowhere is this more clearly the case than in the most typical expression of capitalist policy, the sphere of foreign affairs, where both make strongly for hostility to France and alliance with America. Labour expressions on both these points have been more emphatic than any. It was the group of sixty-seven Labour M.P.'s which sent the cable to the American President to intervene to "save Europe." It was on the very morrow of the election that the Leader of the Labour Party delivered his interview to the French public in which he informed them that "the British people are not well disposed towards France, and nothing would be easier than to rouse opinion against her," and proceeded to remind the French people of their debt to Britain. This interview, which aroused a storm on the Continent, repudiations from Vandervelde in the name of the Second International, and consequent statements in correction which changed nothing from MacDonald (as for the Second International, "we never have agreed, and we never will agree, to anything which victimises Great Britain in the interests of any other State"), was a significant warning to Europe of the future line of a Labour Government.

The result of the election coming upon this situation of the parties brings the issues to a clash. The electors gave a decisive majority for the Labour-Liberal side without yielding any single majority. They destroyed the Conservative majority, but left them the strongest single party. They handed over the proceeds of the Conservative majority to Labour and the Liberals, but divided them almost equally between them. The consequence is a situation without parallel in British Parliamentary history and of extraordinary value and fruitfulness for forcing the pace of political development. It means in effect that there is a decisive majority for change, but no majority for stable government.

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In external policy it means that there is a definite majority for a complete change of policy. Whatever the Government that succeeds to the Conservative Government, whether Labour, Liberal, or Coalition, there is no question that that change will take place and will have far-reaching effects on the whole world position. For Germany, for Russia, for France, those results are of great importance. The recognition of Russia, the attempted economic settlement of Germany under the ægis of international (Anglo-American) finance instead of its subjection to France, the possible break and even war with France, all these are involved. But behind these is the impetus given to the working-class forces of Central Europe when once the reactionary fortress of British and French capitalism in the West breaks up, and the disappearance of Curzon, to be followed by the disappearance of Poincaré, and their replacement by Labour or Leftward Governments, diminishes the danger of intervention. Important as the results are for the existing States of Germany, France, Italy, &c., for the balance of power between the working class and reaction all over Europe they are even more important.

In internal affairs, on the other hand, it means a deadlock of forces compelling intensified conflict and forcing to the ground the class issue. The point has now been reached where all the tactics of the bourgeoisie, whether of division or coalition on their own side, whether of opposition or conciliation to Labour, only lead to the same result. Any form of bourgeois coalition strengthens the Labour forces, as the experience after the war abundantly revealed. Any form of co-operation or understanding with Labour only arouses the strongest class antagonism within the Labour forces, and thus intensifies the actual struggle, as the short controversy after the election has already shown. Finally, the admission of the only remaining course—a Labour Government—means the abandonment of the last great constitutional position and the consequent bare confrontation of the workers with the alternatives of either achieving their ends through the weapon thus won or seeing clearly set out before them the last stage in the struggle for power.

In any event, therefore, there can be no question of the significance of the election in the decay of British capitalism. In

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world politics it means the turning of the tide in favour of the revolutionary forces, and at the same time the hastening of the approach of war. In home politics it means the first awakening of the workers to consciousness of the struggle for power. In both it means a visible stage nearer to the approaching epoch of revolutionary struggle. The attempt to shore up British society on a basis of pre-war stability has failed. Britain is faster and faster being brought into its place in Europe to play its part in the common revolutionary epoch.

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IS IT POSSIBLE TO FIX A DEFINITE TIME FOR A COUNTER-REVOLUTION OR A REVOLUTION?

By L. TROTZKY

"OF course it is not possible. It is only trains which start at certain times, and even they don't always . . ."

Exactitude of thought is necessary everywhere, and in questions of revolutionary strategy more than anywhere else. But as revolutions do not occur so very often, revolutionary conceptions and thought processes become slip-shod, their outlines become vague, the questions are raised anyhow and solved anyhow.

Mussolini brought off his "revolution" (that is, his counter-revolution) at a definitely fixed time made known publicly beforehand. He was able to do this successfully because the Socialists had not accomplished the revolution at the right time. The Bulgarian Fascisti achieved their "revolution" by means of a military conspiracy, the date being fixed and the rôles assigned. The same was the case with the Spanish officers' *coup*. Counter-revolutionary *coups* are almost always carried out along these lines. They are usually attempted at a moment when the disappointment of the masses in revolution or democracy has taken the form of indifference, and a favourable political *milieu* is thus created for an organised and technically prepared *coup*, the date of which is definitely fixed beforehand. One thing is clear: it is not possible to create a political situation favourable for a reactionary upheaval by any artificial means, much less to fix a certain point of time for it. But when the basic elements of this situation already exist, then the leading party seizes the most favourable moment, as we have seen, adapts its political, organisational, and technical forces, and—if it has not miscalculated—deals the final and victorious blow.

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The bourgeoisie has not always made counter-revolutions. In the past it also made revolutions. Did it fix any definite time for these revolutions? It would be interesting, and in many respects instructive, to investigate from this standpoint the development of the classic and of the decadent bourgeois revolutions (a subject for our young Marxist *savants!*), but even without such a detailed analysis it is possible to establish the following fundamentals of the question. The propertied and educated bourgeoisie, that is, that section of the "people" which gained power, did not make the revolution, but waited until it was made. When the movement among the lower strata brought the cup to overflowing, and the old social order or political regime was overthrown, then power fell almost automatically into the hands of the Liberal bourgeoisie. The Liberal *savants* designated such a revolution as a "natural," an inevitable revolution. They gathered together a mighty collection of platitudes under the name of historical laws: revolution and counter-revolution (according to M. Karajev of blessed memory—action and reaction) are declared to be natural products of historical evolution and therefore incapable of being arranged according to the calendar, and so forth. These laws have never prevented well prepared counter-revolutionary coups from being carried out. But the nebulousness of the bourgeois-liberal mode of thought sometimes finds its way into the heads of revolutionists, when it plays havoc and causes much material damage. . . .

But even bourgeois revolutions have not by any means invariably developed at every stage along the lines of the "natural" laws laid down by the Liberal professors; when petty bourgeois-plebeian democracy has overthrown Liberalism, it has done so by means of conspiracy and prepared insurrections, fixed beforehand for definite dates. This was done by the Jacobins—the extreme left wing of the French Revolution. This is perfectly comprehensible. The Liberal bourgeoisie (the French in the year 1789, the Russian in February, 1917) contents itself with waiting for the results of a mighty and elemental movement, in order to throw its wealth, its culture, and its connections with the State apparatus into the scale at the last moment and thus to seize the helm. Petty bourgeois democracy, under similar circumstances, has to

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proceed differently: it has neither wealth nor social influence and connections at its disposal. It finds itself obliged to replace these by a well thought out and carefully prepared plan of revolutionary overthrowal. A plan, however, implies a definite organisation in respect of time, and therefore also the fixing of a definite time.

This applies all the more to proletarian revolution. The Communist Party cannot adopt a waiting attitude in face of the growing revolutionary movement of the proletariat. Strictly speaking, this is the attitude taken by Menshevism: to hinder revolution so long as it is in process of development; to utilise its successes as soon as it is in any degree victorious; and to exert every effort to retard it. The Communist Party cannot seize power by utilising the revolutionary movement and yet standing aside, but by means of a direct and immediate political, organisational, and military-technical leadership of the revolutionary masses, both in the period of slow preparation and at the moment of decisive insurrection itself. For this reason the Communist Party has absolutely no use whatever for a Liberal law according to which revolutions happen but are not made, and therefore cannot be fixed for a definite point of time. From the standpoint of the spectator this law is correct; from the standpoint of the leader it is, however, a platitude and a banality.

Let us imagine a country in which the political conditions necessary for proletarian revolution are either already mature, or are obviously and distinctly maturing day by day. What attitude is to be taken under such circumstances by the Communist Party to the question of insurrection and the definite date on which it is to take place?

When the country is passing through an extraordinarily acute social crisis, when the antagonisms are aggravated to the highest degree, when feeling among the working masses is constantly at boiling point, when the Party is obviously supported by a certain majority of the working people, and consequently by all the most active, class-conscious, and devoted elements of the proletariat, then the task confronting the Party—its only possible task under these circumstances—is to fix a definite time in the immediate future, that is, a time prior to which the favourable revolutionary situation cannot react against us, and then to concentrate every

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effort on the preparations for the final struggle, to place the whole current policy and organisation at the service of the military object in view, that the concentration of forces may justify the striking of the final blow.

To consider not merely an abstract country, let us take the Russian October revolution as an example. The country was in the throes of a great crisis, national and international. The State apparatus was paralysed. The workers streamed in ever-increasing numbers into our Party. From the moment when the Bolsheviki were in the majority in the Petrograd Soviet, and afterwards in the Moscow Soviet, the Party was faced with the question—not of the struggle for power in general, but of preparing for the seizure of power according to a definite plan and at a definite time. The date fixed was the day upon which the All-Russian Soviet Congress was to take place. One section of the members of the Central Committee was of the opinion that the moment of the insurrection should coincide with the political moment of the Soviet Congress. Other members of the Central Committee feared that the bourgeoisie would have made its preparations by then, and would be able to disperse the congress; these wanted to have the congress held at an earlier date. The decision of the Central Committee fixed the date of the armed insurrection for October 15 at latest. This decision was carried out with a certain delay of ten days, as the course of agitational and organisational preparations showed that an insurrection independent of the Soviet Congress would have sown misunderstanding among important sections of the working class, as these connected the idea of the seizure of power with the Soviets and not with the Party and its secret organisations. On the other hand, it was perfectly clear that the bourgeoisie was already too much demoralised to be able to organise any serious resistance for two or three weeks.

Thus, after the Party had gained the majority in the leading Soviets, and had in this way secured the basic political condition for the seizure of power, we were faced by the necessity of fixing a definite calendar date for the decision of the military question. Before we had won the majority, the organisational technical plan was bound to be more or less qualified and elastic. For us the gauge of our revolutionary influence was the Soviets which had

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been called into existence by the Mensheviki and the Social Revolutionists at the beginning of the revolution. The Soviets furnished the cloak for our conspiratorial work; they were also able to serve as governmental organs after the actual seizure of power.

Where would our strategy have been if there had been no Soviets ? It is obvious that we should have had to turn to other gauges of our revolutionary influence: the trade unions, strikes, street demonstrations, every description of democratic electioneering, &c. Although the Soviets represent the most accurate gauge of the actual activity of the masses during a revolutionary epoch, still even without the existence of the Soviets we should have been fully able to ascertain the precise moment at which the actual majority of the working class was on our side. Naturally, at this moment we should have had to issue the slogan of the formation of Soviets to the masses. But in doing this we should have already transferred the whole question to the plane of military conflicts; therefore before we issued the slogan on the formation of Soviets, we should have had to have a properly worked out plan for an armed insurrection at a certain fixed time.

If we had then had the majority of the working people on our side, or at least the majority in the decisive centres and districts, the formation of Soviets would have been secured by our appeal. The backward towns and provinces would have followed the leading centres with more or less delay. We should have then had the political task of establishing a Soviet Congress, and of securing for this congress by military measures the possibility of assuming power. It is clear that these are only two aspects of one and the same task.

Let us now imagine that our Central Committee, in the above described situation—that is, there being no Soviets in existence—had met for a decisive session in the period when the masses had already begun to move, but had not yet ensured us a clear and overwhelming majority. How should we then have developed our further plan of action ? Should we have fixed a definite point of time for the insurrection ?

The reply may be adduced from the above. We should have said to ourselves: At the present moment we have no certain and

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unqualified majority. But the trend of feeling among the masses is such that the decisive and militant majority necessary for us is merely a matter of the next few weeks. Let us assume that it will take a month to win over the majority of the workers in Petrograd, in Moscow, in the Donetz basin; let us set ourselves this task, and concentrate the necessary forces in these centres. As soon as the majority has been gained—and we shall ascertain if this be the case after a month has elapsed—we shall summon the workers to form Soviets. This will require one to two weeks at most for Petrograd, Moscow, and the Donetz basin; it may be calculated with certainty that the remaining towns and provinces will follow the example of the chief centres within the next two or three weeks. Thus, the construction of a network of Soviets will require about a month. After Soviets exist in the important districts, in which we have of course the majority, we shall convene an All-Russian Soviet Congress. We shall require fourteen days to assemble the congress. We have, therefore, two and a-half months at our disposal before the congress. In the course of this time the seizure of power must not only be prepared, but actually accomplished.

We should accordingly have placed before our military organisation a programme allowing two months, at most two and a-half, for the preparation of the insurrection in Petrograd, in Moscow, on the railways, &c. I am speaking in the conditional tense (we should have decided, we should have done this and that), for in reality, although our operations were by no means unskilful, still they were by no means so systematic, not because we were in any way disturbed by "historical laws," but because we were carrying out a proletarian insurrection for the first time.

But are not miscalculations likely to occur by such methods? Seizure of power signifies war, and in war there can be victories and defeats. But the systematic method here described is the best and most direct road to the goal, that is, it most enhances the prospects of victory. Thus, for instance, should it have turned out, a month after the Central Committee session of our above adduced example, that we had not yet the majority of the workers on our side, then we should, of course, not have issued the slogan

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calling for the formation of Soviets, for in this case the slogan would have miscarried (in our example we assume that the Social Revolutionists and Mensheviki are against the Soviets). And had the reverse been the case, and we had found a decisive and militant majority behind us in the course of fourteen days, this would have abridged our plan and accelerated the decisive moment of insurrection. The same applies to the second and third stages of our plan: the formation of Soviets and the summoning of the Soviet Congress. We should not have issued the slogan of the Soviet Congress, as stated above, until we had secured the actual establishment of Soviets at the most important points. In this manner the realisation of every step in our plan is prepared and secured by the realisation of the preceding steps. The work of military preparation proceeds parallel with that of the most definitely dated performance. In this way the Party has its military apparatus under complete control. To be sure, a revolution always brings much that is entirely unexpected, unforeseen, elemental; we have, of course, to allow for the occurrence of all these "accidents" and adapt ourselves to them; but we can do this with the greater success and certainty if our conspiracy is thoroughly worked out.

Revolution possesses a mighty power of improvisation, but it never improvises anything good for fatalists, idlers, and fools. Victory demands correct political orientation, organisation, and the will to deal the decisive blow.

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THE FRENCH PRESS AND TSARIST RUSSIA

By T. L.

WHEN the present Russian Government came into power in 1917, one of its first acts was to search the offices of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs for the secret treaties concluded during the war, which were duly published and have been brought to the notice of readers of the British Labour Press.

A second task, immediately undertaken but delayed by the conditions of civil war which supervened, was that of searching the State archives for documents showing the origin of the war of 1914. This task was interrupted by the enforced removal, during 1918, of many of the archives which were in Petrograd to the present capital, Moscow. The Russian historians who were engaged in this research were helped by M. Réné Marchand, at one time Russian correspondent of the *Figaro* and the *Petit Parisien*, a journalist of undoubted honesty.

M. Réné Marchand printed some of the documents discovered in these archives in the *Livre Noir*, the second volume of which was published in Paris this last autumn. The most important documents given were the letters of Isvolsky, at one time Russian Ambassador in Paris, to the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs. Among the facts proved by this detailed correspondence was the expenditure of considerable sums of money (particularly during the Balkan wars) by the Russian Ministry for Foreign Affairs in order to influence the policy of the French Press.

The effect of these revelations in Paris was very considerable. The light they threw on the origin of the war secured for them a certain publicity in Labour and pacifist papers in this country, but the payments to the French Press were not widely noticed. Meanwhile the Russian archives were still being searched by students of history, and the Ministry of Finances was being investigated. From these *dossiers* new material on the French Press has been taken, which shows that the majority of the papers not only

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received regular payments from the Russian Ministry for Finance, but almost without exception were engaged in blackmailing the Russians in order to get as much as possible.

The new documents include letters by M. Kokovtzev, a Russian President of the Council of Ministers, M. Sazonov, Minister for Foreign Affairs, M. Isvolsky, Ambassador to Paris, and M. Davidov, Director of the Russian Office for Loans. But the most important letters are those of M. Arthur Raffalovitch, the secret adviser of the Russian Finance Ministry in Paris.

M. Raffalovitch was *Grand Officier* of the Legion of Honour, a corresponding member of the Paris Institute, a member of the Society for Political Economy, and a contributor to the *Débats*, *l'Economiste français*, the *Journal des Economistes*, and other publications. He was a director of the *Marché Financier* and a member of various statistical societies, &c. His correspondence cannot be treated lightly. He was well known in Paris—and the receipted cheques, the passage of which he describes, are in Moscow. It will therefore be a little difficult for the newspaper owners whom he describes in such acid terms to disprove his statements.

He was not, of course, in any way a revolutionary or a radical. The indignation that he expresses at the " abominable venality of the French Press " arises naturally from the ordinary honesty of a reactionary accustomed to upper class traditions of decency.

His letters are appearing in *l'Humanité*, and the first can be given without further introduction.

PARIS,
August, 1904.

The Minister of Finance,

I have the honour to report to Your Excellency the arrangement that has been made for the French Press. I have been careful to consult, with regard to these calculations, M. Hottinguer and M. Chevrand, who is the managing director of the *Banque de Paris et des Pays Bas* ; they agree with my view-point. Though it is necessary to continue to make a sacrifice, in order to ensure tranquillity on the part of the Press, it is very important to limit the sacrifice. After carrying on for one more month on the old terms of one hundred thousand francs, it is necessary to reduce considerably the outgoings.

Here then is the arrangement that we have come to : the next monthly grant shall be of one hundred thousand francs, but will in reality be spread over six weeks, covering the period from August 15 to October 1. Hitherto the grants have been from the 15th of one month to the 15th of the next, beginning

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with February 15. For the coming months only fifty thousand francs will be given, which will carry us on to the end of January. I hope to be able to avoid breaking into the 25,000 francs which will be left as a result of this arrangement, but I beg that this money should not be used for any other purpose before the end of that period, for it is possible that we may have extraordinary needs at any given moment. As for example if it is necessary to explain satisfactorily the Budget of 1905.

For the first ten[1] months, the abominable venality of the French Press will have absorbed (quite apart from the advertising of the Loan of 800 millions) a sum of six hundred thousand francs, of which the bankers have furnished one half. We have had to pay for three months at 66,666 francs (February 15 to May 15) during which the bankers spent 33,334 francs, then one hundred thousand francs for the months ending June 15, July 15, and August 15. The month and a half from August 15 to October 1 must be paid for by us.

The intermediary recommended to me by the representative of M. Rouvier, last February, is M. Lenoir, *Chevalier* of the Legion of Honour, who takes 10 per cent. commission for his trouble.

The amount spent on the political papers is 48,350 francs, on securing personal co-operation (that is, the co-operation of editors, financial editors, and the managers of the papers) 13,300 francs; 15,000 francs for the provincial papers and the news agencies, and 14,500 for the financial papers

The money is paid over at the end of the month by means of the *Banque de Paris et des Pays Bas* to the *Credit Algerien*, against which the intermediary draws cheques. Some individuals have to be paid from hand to hand.

As it is necessary that the name of the Russian Government or of the agent of the Ministry of Finance should not appear in this transaction, the payments are made as if they still emanated from the Syndicate of Banks and Bankers.

This expenditure is made in order to defend the credit of Russia; it softens the systematic attacks against the Russian Government in general without making it possible to stop them entirely. If at any time there were any communications to be put into the papers, it would be necessary to profit by the circumstances which give us a certain influence over them.

I have reported the arrangements to the Russian Ambassador.

Your most obedient servant,

A. RAFFALOVITCH

The date of this letter serves to place it. In August, 1904, the Russo-Japanese war was beginning, and a loan of 800 million francs had been floated on the French market. It was necessary to "soften the attacks" of the French Press in order to secure the success of this loan and keep the market open for the further loans that would certainly prove necessary.

Further letters describe in detail the blackmail levied on the

[1] This appears to be a misprint for "six months" (*dix* instead of *six*)—T. L.

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Russian Government as a result of its failures in Manchuria by the editors or owners of *Le Figaro*, *La Liberté*, *Gil Blas*, *l'Action*, *Le Petit Parisien*, *Le Petit Journal*, the *Temps*, and the *Matin*.

The last named is probably better known in this country than the others, and its case is the most interesting in view of the libel action against *l'Humanité* which it has begun. But before proceeding to describe the charges against the *Matin* and the evidence on which they are based, it would be as well to follow for a moment the fortunes of the Russian Government in Paris as the defeat of its armies in the Far East became more and more evident.

We have already seen the expenditure during 1904. The following curt memorandum shows the increase in 1905 :—

[Copy] NOTE.

The sums expended in subventions to the French Press during the two years reach the following figures :—

	1904	1905
Publicity	725,000	1,728,700
Publication of the Loan redemption drawings ("tirage")	151,210	148,500
Matin	—	35,000
Loan Redemption Office	16,079	15,961
Correspondence R.	28,800	28,800
Bulletin Russe	11,496	—
Marché Financier	3,200	3,200
Total	935,785	2,014,161

(Signed) BELLEGARDE.

January 23, 1906

It will be seen that the heading "Publicity" is given to the sums spent in calming the avidity of the French Press, and that the other headings—except for one—represent normal expenses such as the publication (necessary by law) of the successful numbers in the *tirage* and the subsidies to two journals officially or semi-officially subsidised by the Tsar's Government.

The huge sum of 1,782,700 francs (in 1905 worth over £70,000) spent on "publicity" in 1905 is analysed in the following memorandum prepared by the Russian Office for Loans (*Chancellerie des Operations de Crédit*):—

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[Copy] NOTE

The expenses for 1905 for publicity may be divided into four periods, as follows :—

(1) From the beginning of the year until the battle of Mukden, February 28 (February 14 Old Style), 1905 : 100,000	247,700
(2) After Mukden (on the insistence of M. de Verneuil) up to the conclusion of peace, August 16 : rather more than 200,000	1,035,000
(3) From the conclusion of peace to November: 100,000	200,000
(4) From November (the revolutionary movements at the time of the Empire) : 150,000	300,000
Total	Frs. 1,782,700

For the future, M. Raffalovitch, the agent of the Finance Minister in Paris, estimates the cost of publicity according to the schedule given below at the sum of 115,000 ftancs per month.

DAVIDOV.

January 23, 1906.

This useful division of the total shows how Russia's crushing defeat at Mukden provided a welcome opportunity to her close allies. It is now possible to study an individual case—that of the *Matin*—which while typical is by no means one of the worst.

Two days after *l'Humanité* began its revelations the *Matin*, which had scarcely been mentioned, took upon itself to issue a complete denial to the charges which it knew were certain to come. The letter ends:—

> We must renew our affirmation that the *Matin* has never received subventions : we defy any one to prove that any government or any person has paid to the *Matin* a sum of money which has not been entered as usual in the accounts, and is not represented by the net sale of copies or by advertisements.

L'Humanité republished this letter, and Boris Souvarine, who is "editing" the publication of the documents, replied in the following terms:—

"The *Matin* is very fearless. But behind its bragging, what it says amounts to this: When we make a deal, the results are written down under the heading 'publicity.'

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" That proves that the accounts of the *Matin* are well kept. Nothing more.

"*But when a paper obtains publicity* (*advertisements*), *or a higher price for its advertisements, by threatening to publish disagreeable things if its demands are not fulfilled, what is that to be called ?*

" We answer: blackmail.

" And when the fruits of this blackmail are written down as ' publicity,' the blackmail is still blackmail.

" And now, let us draw a few more documents from the packet.

" Here is a letter written at a moment when Russia's position, during the war with Japan, was going from bad to worse " [1]:—

March 1, 1905.

To come back to practical matters, we must think over the possibility of getting in touch with the *Matin* and conceding to it the large sum that it will ask for changing its attitude to at least a benevolent neutrality. It has already had at one time 50,000 to 60,000 francs when the Belgian campaign against Russia's credit was on. That was in peace time ; at present it has refused the 3,000 a month that we wished to assure to it ; it would ask for a great deal more.

While there were no troubles in the interior (of Russia) the *Matin* was not of much importance. But now it is perhaps necessary to neutralise it. That is what I have permitted myself to ask Your Excellency.

The formula, then, is to make a big sacrifice to bring pressure upon the political side of the Press, to cleanse the attitude of the *Matin ;* but money is wanted for that. I should be glad to know what Your Excellency wishes me to do.

His Excellency approved. Not only was M. Bunau-Varilla, millionaire owner of the *Matin*, " neutralised " by large sums paid for financial advertisements, but at the same time several members of the staff received *mensualitées*. One gentleman mentioned by *l'Humanité* is stated to have received 1,000 francs a month, while another, the Financial Editor, received 500 a month. Photographs of the cheques by which payment was made are said to be available.

The following letter clinches the question of the Financial Editor:—

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[1] [We give the second half of the postscript.—T. L.]

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May 11, 1906.

Monsieur le Ministre,

. . The Financial Editor of the *Matin*, Brégand, writes to me with to-day's date :—

> I am going to have two articles a month for six months to do for the *Matin*, to justify the monthly payment made to the paper (Russia). In the two articles which I have published to justify the price of the Russian Loan, I have sucked dry all the documents which I had at my disposal. I should be much obliged if you could prepare for me some documents, books, or reports on Russia, or useful extracts from your *Marché Financier*, 1906, concerning Russia. I shall take from them the material necessary for these articles.

May I ask Your Excellency to be so good as to prepare and send some rough drafts of articles, with figures and arguments, for the use of M. Brégand and others ?

. . . I may also ask for some sort of receipt or *quittance* for the money distributed to the Press, through the *Banque de Paris* and the intermediary Lenoir, if Your Excellency considers it necessary.

Your most obedient Servant,

A. RAFFALOVITCH.

It will be seen that the sacrifice has been made; the *Matin* has become very benevolently neutral. Let us go back a little and see how the *Matin's* accounts were kept during this period.

The following letter introduces a new character, a certain de Verneuil. He acts as go-between in the business of blackmail, as Lenoir acts in the business of payment. His title—for he is an official and acts in concert with the French Government—may be translated as Official Trustee to the Stock Exchange (*Syndic des Agents de Change*).

We print the second paragraph of this letter, as the others describe only the manœuvres of the *Syndic* to secure a guaranteed 300,000 francs a month freely at his disposal for distribution to the Press, and Raffalovitch's attitude—" stingy, niggardly, mean "—towards this demand.

PARIS,

March 14, 1905.

. . . The *Syndic* has informed me that he has seen the owner of the *Matin*, and has flattered him enough to bring him to be willing, in the event of a panic, to act in defence of Russia's credit. The *Matin* will not take any money, but he has asked for the maximum of advertisements of the redemption drawings. He must be having 3,000 (lines of advertisement) a month, and he wants to be put on a level with the *Temps* and the *Economiste Européen* which

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have about 7,000 to 8,000 lines. I don't know his tariff, which ought to be between 3 and 5 francs (a line); I hope so . . .

Your most obedient servant,
A. RAFFALOVITCH.

"The *Matin* will not take any money, but . . ." A special 35,000 francs is set aside for the "personal interviews" with members of the *Matin's* staff (see Bellegarde's memorandum, above), and some 20,000 to 40,000 francs given for advertisements every month.

This was in 1905. In 1908 the arrangement was still working, though M. Bunau-Varilla was now insisting on a "most favoured nation clause" in the new treaty—which was at a lower rate now that Russia had come safe through the war and the revolution of 1905. Raffalovitch writes:—

PARIS,
March 5, 1908

[Secret]
Monsieur le Ministre,

I have just had a long conversation with M. Bunau-Varilla on the occasion of the agreement reached with him for the publication of lists of the drawings. These will run to four thousand lines at 5 francs each or two thousand at 10 francs. I will communicate the details to M. Davidov, who will put it into effect.

The point on which he has insisted above all is that he should have the most favoured treatment. I have replied to him that he has this, for no paper gets 20,000 francs

While the last extract given above was being published, the *Matin* decided to take action. It published a note stating that "the propaganda sheet of the Soviets in France . . . has attacked the *Matin*. In order to permit it to go through with its demonstration, we offer it a public occasion, in suing it for five hundred thousand francs damages. This is exactly the amount offered by the Russian propagandists to the *Matin*, and refused by the *Matin*, as will be proved by irrefutable documents handed over by the *Matin* to the French Government and published more than fifteen years ago."

The challenge was at once taken up by *l'Humanité*, which in turn has entered a counter-claim for 500,000 francs for defamation —"propaganda sheet of the Soviets" being apparently the basis of the charge.

Not content with this, *l'Humanité* is continuing its publication

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of the documents. The cumulative effect of these—the store seems inexhaustible—is very marked. It is notable, for instance, that various papers challenged by *l'Humanité* to reproduce extracts or at least to give the general sense of the revelations have ceased to do so. One dug up some "revelations" from the *Livre Noir*, published months ago, and made a half-hearted effort to palm them off as the cause of all the excitement. Others gave, for one day, hurried and emasculated summaries; then silence. *l'Humanité* went on:—

[Telegram] MINISTRY FINANCES, ST. PETERSBURG,
February 1, 1905.

Publicity agent employed until now supposes with 700,000 maximum per quarter can reach satisfactory result, including *Matin*.

RAFFALOVITCH.

"The whole of the correspondence of M. Raffalovitch," says *l'Humanité*, "shows the exceptional character of the subsidy given to the paper known to be 'the most untruthful in the world.'"

To the best of our knowledge the British Press has so far avoided any mention of the revelations or of the lawsuits arising out of them. A point of considerable interest is that M. Kokovtzev, the Russian Premier who received reports from Raffalovitch and Davidov, trusted them, and maintained them in their positions, is at present in Paris and will be called as a witness by *l'Humanité*! If this *émigré* aristocrat can be got into the witness box, he will find it difficult to deny his own signature or to cast doubts on the honesty of his dead friend Raffalovitch.

The whole affair induces reflection. Does it seem probable, for instance, that the machinery of propaganda throughout the world built up by Lord Northcliffe for the British Government can really have been allowed to fall to pieces? Is money flowing now for "publicity" of some sort by means of the Board of Trade (under the heading "Consular services" or "trade facilities") or through the Foreign Office? And is it not just possible that one or two British papers, so notably sober in their honesty, political or journalistic (and so vigorously pro-Poincaré), may have played the part allotted to the *Matin*? Subtler methods are in vogue nowadays,

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but surely the *Credit Lyonnais* has appeared between the same brackets with a British newspaper in one of Walton Newbold's essays on modern capitalism? When Souvarine and his friends are in power in France we shall know more. Meanwhile, let us continue in the belief that all Frenchmen are naturally dishonest and all English editors impeccable.

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THE LABOUR MOVEMENT IN SWEDEN.—I

By FREDRIK STROM & KARL MALMSTEN

INDUSTRIALISM began to develop on a small scale in Sweden during the period 1840-1850, and was soon followed by the formation of workers' unions in 1860. These so-called workers' unions, in which the foremen were most prominent, were partly under the tutelage of Liberalism and concentrated on general education, discussions on political, social, and other duties, the formation of centres for libraries, meetings, and such like. Others were purely reform unions for the purpose of carrying through certain Liberal reforms. The employers soon recognised and supported these workers' unions, which protested in 1870 against the down-tools policy, strikes, enmity between foremen and workers, and above all against " the Socialistic, Communist, and Nihilist doctrines preached in other countries."

A section of the younger workers, however, began to rise up against the conservative spirit of both the workers and the reform unions and demanded a " clear Liberal " course.

Towards the end of 1870 Sweden witnessed the first great strike, in the Sundsvall district amongst the saw-mill workers. It was a spontaneous peaceful cessation of work, as a protest against unbearable conditions. The workers concerned in the strike were for the most part Christians and Royalists, and yet the strike was put down by force: enticed to a meeting, the strikers were surrounded by the military with artillery and warrants for the arrest of the strikers.

Discussions on the formation of unions took place at various workers' congresses towards the end of the 'seventies and beginnings of the 'eighties. Opinions varied greatly. The formation of a few unions in Sweden and the development of trade unionism abroad provoked wider discussions.

The oldest trade union in Sweden is the Typographical Union, which was founded as far back as 1846 and continued to operate

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till 1872, when it was succeeded by "the Union of Stockholm Bookbinders." In 1874, the "Union of Stockholm Hatters" was founded, and in 1876 the Upholsterers' Union; the Carpenters' Unions were founded in 1880, and also the "Iron Workers' Union of Northern Stockholm." The following years marked the formation of quite a number of unions, not only in Stockholm, but also in the larger provincial towns.

The leadership of the Trade Unions, which at first had but a modest programme, was in the hands of workers with Liberal sympathies who were on a friendly footing with the Liberal "workers' unions."

They formed a left-wing and represented the Left opposition within the Liberal Unions.

A series of small and often badly conducted strikes marked the early stages of the growth of trade unionism. In 1883 the Central Committee of Trade Unions was formed in Stockholm, under Liberal leadership: but was also partly influenced by August Palm, a tailor who at that time returned from Germany and Denmark and delivered Socialist speeches which met with vigorous opposition from the Liberals.

The statutes of the Central Committee included amongst their aims the intention "of forming a really strong Labour Party from the various categories of workers, with a view to attaining such reforms as are necessary to the development of the State on reasonable lines; further to link up with similar committees and trade unions both at home and abroad, to organise Labour meetings, and to encourage the propagation of really broad-minded literature."

The programme demanded a ten-hour day, factory inspectors, old-age pensions, the establishment of a Labour Exchange, a conciliation committee for quarrels between workers and employers, the advancement of temperance, progressive taxation, more humane laws, and universal suffrage.

A sharp conflict arose, both in the ranks of the Central Committee and the trade unions, between the Liberal and Social-Democratic elements. The struggle of the Socialists was for a considerable period without results, but after some years the Socialists gained the day and Liberal trade union leaders gave place to Socialists throughout the movement.

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In 1886 the Central Committee adopted a new programme, and proclaimed in its declaration : " On the assumption that the profit of labour should accrue to those who do the work and that all members of the State should have the same duties and rights, the Swedish Trade Unions wish to try to protect the workers against oppression and despotism by means of united effort and mutual support, and step by step to fight for the attainment of equality for all citizens."

The programme was divided into two sections: economic, and "citizenship." The economic section demanded a ten-hour working day; the inspection of factories by the workers; compulsory insurance against accident, illness, and old age; the right to strike, and State-aided production. Amongst the demands included under citizenship were : universal suffrage; abolition of indirect taxation; progressive income tax and death duties; elementary education to be compulsory, free, and without variation for all classes; the abolition of the State Church and of the standing army and the introduction of a militia on a conscript basis.

The struggle between Liberalism and Socialism continued within the ever-growing trade union movement ; a few Liberal unions seceded from the Central Committee, only to rejoin when the Socialist element in their ranks had taken the lead. Attempts to found a separate Liberal Central Committee were frustrated. It was in this period that programmes concerning the economic struggle with the employers were revised repeatedly, with the object of securing greater legality and power for the organisation in the conflict with the employers in the labour market.

The strikes which took place in Sweden in the period between 1863-1889 were as follows :—

1863 ..	1	1874 ..	9	1883 ..	5
1865 ..	1	1875 ..	3	1884 ..	6
1867 ..	2	1876 ..	1	1885 ..	10
1868 ..	3	1877 ..	3	1886 ..	29
1869 ..	4	1878 ..	1	1887 ..	16
1870 ..	1	1879 ..	7	1888 ..	41
1871 ..	5	1880 ..	3	1889 ..	38
1872 ..	8	1881 ..	10		
1873 ..	11	1882 ..	4		

The increase in strikes towards the close of the 'eighties

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resulted in the formation by local unions of craft unions linked up throughout the country. Thus in 1885 the Typographical Society was founded, in 1887 the Painters' Society, in 1888 the Iron and Steel Workers' Society. But the societies thus formed were very weak ; the strongest, the Iron and Steel Union, was reported to have a membership of 1,421 and eleven branches at the Congress held in 1889. The craft unions joined the national body in 1895.

When the Swedish Social-Democratic Labour Party was formed on May 10, 1889, it was suggested that the Trade Union Central Committee should be dissolved. On August 9, 1889, the Committee was declared dissolved by a general meeting of the trade unions and all craft unions were invited to join the Social-Democratic Labour Party. Thus a death-blow was dealt to the Liberal craft unions and workers' movement which had prevailed for thirty years. After 1889, none but Socialists were elected as leaders of the craft unions and trade unions generally. The local trade unions were obliged to belong to the Social-Democratic Labour Party ; and the party aims and programme (revolutionary for those days) were to be a standard for the political efficiency of the craft unions. We shall return to this programme later. It marks the first revolutionary period of Swedish Trade Unionism, since it maintains the principle of the revolutionary class-war and takes as basis *The Communist Manifesto* of Marx and Engels. During the years 1889-98 (when the Federation of Trade Unions was founded), the Social-Democratic Labour Party was the centre and directorate of the rapidly growing Trade Union Movement.

The Trade Union Movement was Socialist from the point of view of an organisation. The Party became the central director of the whole Labour Movement ; the history of the Trade Union Movement during this time is identical with that of the Social-Democratic Labour Party. After the foundation of the Federation of Trade Unions in 1898 the independence of the Trade Union Movement increased somewhat ; but since the lessening of the Party and provincial organisation was on the whole the same, and since the local unions throughout the country affiliated *en bloc* to the Party, whilst the papers started by the trade unions became Party organs, the Trade Union Movement in Sweden (even up to

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the present day) is practically nothing but a branch of the Social-Democratic Party.

This dependence of the trade unions was of great value as long as the Party was revolutionary or at least Socialistic and active. But since revisionism and reformism finally conquered the Party in 1909, this vassaldom of the trade unions to the Party has been the cause of damage to the Swedish workers in their struggle for liberty.

At the moment a helpless, cowardly opportunism, a paralysing surrender policy towards the employers, and saddening pessimism pervades the whole Swedish Trade Union Movement. The leadership is mainly in the hands of revisionists and citizens of a most inactive calibre, mentally sterile. The Swedish Federation of Trade Unions adorns the Amsterdam Trade Union International and the International Labour Office, where it operates with the extreme right wing.

As a result of discontent due to the reactionary development of the Federation of Trade Unions and its craft unions, a Syndicalist Trade Union body was founded in 1911 with the title of the Swedish Workers' Central Organisation. At first this body was slightly revolutionary, but recently this movement has developed a right wing tendency under Anarchist leadership. It is now nothing but a petty bourgeois counter-revolutionary economic-reformist movement. The present membership is about 30,000. Discontent both with this movement and with the Federation of Trade Unions has resulted in the formation of the "Craft Propaganda Society" by the Communists within the Federation. This is a Communist opposition movement, operative throughout the whole craft union movement.

The history of the Trade Union Movement as regards membership is best reviewed by the following statistics :—

1888	..	2,228	1912	..	125,763
1890	..	7,398	1915	..	161,639
1895	..	12,255	1918	..	296,156
1900	..	59,368	1919	..	332,798
1905	..	118,793	1920	..	402,000[2]
1908	..	225,325	1921	..	390,000[2]
1910[1]	..	106,465	1922	..	350,000[2]

[1] After the disastrous general strikes in 1909.

[2] These figures are approximate.

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The number of unions affiliated to the Federation of Trade Unions and the number of branches included is as follows :—

Year	No. of Unions	No. of Branches	Year	No. of Unions	No. of Branches
1899	16	669	1910	27	1,576
1900	23	787	1915	27	1,502
1905	30	1,291	1918	30	2,305
1908	28	2,172	1922	33	3,207

In 1922 there were thirty unions not affiliated to the Federation of Trade Unions ; these unions have 1,000 branches and a membership of about 70,000. Therefore the total membership of the trade unions in Sweden may be estimated at 360,000, organised in sixty-three unions with about 4,300 branches. If we include the Central Syndicalist organisation, the number of organised workers is 400,000.

Practically every trade union has its own newspaper, the total circulation being over 300,000. All these journals are reformist and right wing in character, and edited in a counter-revolutionary spirit. The majority of the Swedish unions comprise benefit societies, which have funds for continuous pay during strikes, lock-outs, &c., and also pay unemployment benefit, provide funds for travelling, and in special cases give support during illness and defray the cost of educational classes, holidays, &c. In consequence of the considerable amounts which the Swedish unions pay the members during conflicts with the employers, the subscriptions are accordingly very high.

There were 307 disputes in 1922 on account of wages, and for other causes eighty-five, involving 75,679 workers.

The cost of disputes borne by the unions amounted to 668,840 kronen in 1914 ; 1,411,058 kronen in 1917 ; 10,334,813 kronen in 1920 ; and 4,304,760 kronen in 1921.

In 1921 the disputes involved 9,838 employers and 234,421 workers. The majority of the differences were settled by negotiations without resorting to strikes. In those cases where strikes took place, 25 per cent. were settled within a week and 40 per cent. within a month.

All agreements between the trade unions and the workers are made by collective bargaining. In 1922, 1,416 collective agreements were concluded which comprised 279,772 workers.

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The numbers of workers' disputes which have taken place are :—

Year	No. of Disputes	No. of Workers Organised	No. of Workers Total with Unorganised
1912 ..	345	19,441	29,481
1913 ..	426	38,847	69,882
1914 ..	430	27,489	46,814
1915 ..	398	18,450	32,568
1916 ..	1,247	79,279	125,900
1917 ..	1,777	105,116	156,650
1918 ..	2,878	156,536	217,694
1919 ..	2,950	226,104	275,964
1920 ..	3,419	282,784	339,234
1921 ..	3,292	198,181	234,420

Reformist methods and tactics marked the conduct of the majority of these strikes and during the days of industrial prosperity important results were achieved in respect of wage increases. With the slump, however, these methods have resulted in one overthrow after the other, and deterioration and defeat.

When the trade boom in Sweden was at its highest in 1922, 23 per cent. of the disputes were settled on the workers' conditions, 21 per cent. on the employers', 51 per cent. ended in compromise, and 5 per cent. remained unsettled.

Swedish employers are organised in various exceedingly strong societies which are linked up with kindred bodies throughout all Scandinavia. These organisations in Sweden include employers who have a total of 450,000 workers. They possess enormous strike funds, raised by means of bonds based on the number of workers engaged in the various industries. These bonds are realised in times of strife so that the employers involved in strikes receive support for their enterprises. In addition there are the banks at the disposition of the employers' association ; so that in cases of big strikes the Swedish workers are up against the whole system of organised capital.

(*We hope to print in a future issue a second article on the Labour Movement in Sweden, by the author of the above, in which the political organisations of the workers in Sweden will be described.*—Editor, THE LABOUR MONTHLY.)

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The World of Labour

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POLAND

Strike Movements

IN Poland during the past year two parallel and striking series of events have been noticeable. First, Polish bourgeois economy has entered on a period of acute crisis, symbolised by the collapse of the mark : politically, power has passed to the hands of the (Fascist) National Democrats. Secondly, the Polish workers are beginning to awake.

The economic position of the workers has been getting progressively worse. At the beginning of 1923 the average real wage only amounted to 30 to 40 per cent. of pre-war wages, as compared with 50 per cent. in 1921. In June and July food prices rose by 100 per cent. and more ; while from official statistics it was calculated that the rise in purchasing power of an average working-class family was just over 49 per cent.

The strike wave began when the workers in the saw mills of Eastern Galicia demanded wage increases. They were joined by the textile workers of Lodz (the Manchester of Central and Eastern Europe), and by the metal and building workers of Warsaw and other centres. By the middle of July the strike had become practically general, the most notable exception being the miners, whose demands had been acceded to by the employers at the beginning of the month. In Warsaw alone 20,000 metal workers, employed at 70 factories, and 15,000 building workers were on strike. But the struggle centred in Lodz.

Here all the factories were involved, including the leather works, and the number of strikers was estimated at 100,000. Despite the repressive measures immediately adopted by the government in all strike centres, the workers presented an unbroken front. The mass meetings and demonstrations were described as bigger even than those of the revolutionary year 1919. Virtual leadership of the movement was in the hands of the left-wing opposition within the workers' organisations—the partisans of the Red International of Labour Unions and the Communists.

As a result of the solidarity and fighting spirit of the workers, following a forward policy, the majority of the strikes were successful. The Lodz textile workers secured a 67 per cent. wage increase (they had demanded 79 per

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cent.). In Warsaw the metal workers gained, among other demands, a three months' collective agreement, for which they had been fighting for the past two and a half years.

The influence of the left-wing opposition has increased remarkably among the masses of the workers. Two illustrations of this may be given.

The elections for delegates to the conference of the Textile Workers' Union took place in August and September, immediately after the successful conclusion of the strike. Out of 67 delegates 35 were left-wingers. Of these 22 came from Lodz. On certain alleged purely formal grounds the right-wing Union executive demanded a re-election in Lodz. The 22 left-wing delegates were all re-elected on an increased vote.

In the Warsaw district of the Metal Workers' Union, the left-wing elements have long been agitating for proportional representation in elections to the Union executive. This demand has been steadfastly opposed by the right wing. However, at the Warsaw Shop Stewards' Conference, at the end of September, a resolution demanding a proportional ballot for the Union executive was carried. It was also decided that the executive should cancel all expulsions of revolutionary members from the Union.

The united front is rapidly becoming an actuality in Poland. Even the right-wing Polish Socialist Party has been affected by the new spirit among the workers. It has been forced out of its attitude of subservience to the government, but it is obviously perplexed by the rising tide of revolt among the workers. The result is a certain lack of resolution which was exhibited most strikingly in the part played by the Socialist Party during the strike movement of the autumn.

This second strike wave commenced in the early days of October in Upper Silesia, where right through the year unrest, often breaking out into serious and widespread strikes, has been endemic. The movement comprised miners, railwaymen, iron and steel workers, and postal and telegraph workers. Demands for wage increases were put forward, variously reported at 200 per cent. to 240 per cent. The employment by the government of military force to break the strike, and the determined resistance of the workers, lent it an atmosphere of civil war. The government persecution was directed particularly against the Communists.

Meanwhile, the cost of living continued to leap up. During the first half of October it increased 85 per cent. The official wage-regulating price index was only compiled fortnightly, and lagged a long way behind the actual cost of living. About the middle of October, the railwaymen struck at Lemberg: within a week the railway men at Cracow, Lodz, and other centres had come out. Silesia was cut off and railway traffic all over Poland disorganised. On October 24, the 100,000 Lodz textile workers struck, demanding a weekly calculation of the price index. Other workers, miners (70,000 in the Dombrowa), municipal employees, postal workers, joined the strikers. The strike rapidly took on the aspect of a wide mass movement. The government replied by instituting courts-martial for the summary trial of strikers and by the militarisation of the railways (*i.e.*, the calling of striking railwaymen to the colours).

Up to now the Socialist Party had held aloof: certain leaders had

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approached the government with a request for "mediation" and had been politely snubbed for their pains. At length, realising the desperate nature of the position, the Socialist Party issued a call for a general strike, to take place on November 5. In Cracow the strikers came into armed conflict with the troops. Many workers were killed and wounded. But, most significant of all, the infantry (mostly peasants recruited in Silesia and Eastern Galicia) actually fraternised with the strikers and handed over their arms. The control of a large part of the town passed into the hands of the workers, who set up their own police and generally took over the administration.

Now seriously alarmed, the government hastily decided to revoke the courts-martial and the militarisation of the railways. Instead of pursuing its advantage, and giving every possible assistance to the Cracow workers, the Polish Socialist Party acquiesced in the government's decision and called off the strike. This was on November 7.

A special manifesto on the Polish strikes has been issued by the Communist International. After criticising the Socialist Party leaders as being "afraid of victory," special emphasis is laid on the significance of the events in Cracow.

> In Cracow the Polish and Ukrainian peasants in uniform went over to the workers and gave to the proletariat the weapons which the bourgeoisie had intended for use against them.
>
> To extend and to consolidate this alliance between the workers and peasants which was sealed with blood in Cracow is the chief lesson from the Cracow events, the main task of the Polish Communists, and a guarantee of the victory of the Polish Revolution.

The events in Cracow, in short, are taken as pointing the moral of the Workers' and Peasants' Government.

BULGARIA

The Communist Party and the Peasantry

BULGARIA is predominantly a peasant country. The peasantry comprise, it has been estimated, 85 to 90 per cent. of the population. No urban class, whether the bourgeoisie or the workers, can govern without the support, or at the worst the benevolent neutrality, of the peasantry. It is equally certain that the peasants themselves, lacking the political cohesion of the urban classes, cannot hope alone to hold power for any length of time. However, the experiment was made.

Under the leadership of Stambulisky, the Peasant Party after the war swept from power the discredited military-bourgeois clique who had ruled Bulgaria for the last forty years. But the Peasant Party was far from being a homogeneous party. Its leaders were largely intellectuals, and the rich peasants gradually secured more and more influence within it. Consequently the small peasants became apathetic towards the party. Signs of disintegration were apparent.

Stambulisky himself and his immediate followers were over-confident, relying absolutely on the big Parliamentary majority of their party. Their political evolution was to the right, as their persecution of the Communists showed.

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Meanwhile the urban bourgeoisie had not been idle. On June 9, 1923, a successful Fascist *coup d'état* was carried out, with the countenance of British imperialism. Stambulisky was captured and shot after a few days' fighting, and the organisation of the Peasant Party virtually broken up for the time being. A Fascist government was set up under the presidency of Tsankoff, with the collaboration of the Social-Democrats.

In this crisis the powerful Bulgarian Communist Party made one fatal error. The executive telegraphed to all local party organisations to remain neutral in the struggle between the Peasant Party and the Fascist urban bourgeoisie. That telegram sealed the fate of the masses of small peasants and the working class and ensured a Fascist victory. The Communist Party, large in numbers and experienced through many years of peaceful propaganda though it was, had failed to see the necessity for rallying the masses in the Peasant Party (as distinct from their reactionary leaders) for the struggle against Fascism.

A few months of the Tsankoff regime, in which Fascists and Social-Democrats united to terrorise and oppress the active elements among the peasantry, as well as the Communists, brought a different situation. In the widespread insurrection which broke out all over the country in September, the Communists took their place as the leaders of the revolting peasantry. The latter had gained much in political consciousness and homogeneity as a result of the Tsankoff terror ; also the realisation was rapidly coming to them that their true interest lay in a firm alliance with the revolutionary workers in the towns. The insurrection was only suppressed by the government after weeks of very heavy fighting.

The significance of the Bulgarian events has been summarised by Zinoviev in an authoritative article. We quote :—

> Together with a working class led by the Communist Party, the peasantry is everything ; without the working class, and endeavouring to take up an intermediate " independent " position between the bourgeoisie and the working class, the peasantry is nothing. And every such endeavour leads to the open dictatorship of the unbounded reaction of the big landowners . . . . Class elements essentially hostile to the peasantry invariably try to gain a hold over the peasants. The Communists must reply to this with intensive propaganda for the Workers' and Peasants' Government, and must make it clear to the active sections of the peasantry of the whole world that the peasantry can only defend its real interests when allied to the working people of the towns. This is the import of the Bulgarian events.[1]

At the General Election in November the Government Coalition secured 201 seats with 60 per cent of the total votes cast ; the Agrarian-Communist opposition secured 46 seats with 40 per cent of the total votes.

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[1] See further, on this point, the manifesto of the International Peasants' Congress in THE LABOUR MONTHLY for December, 1923, Vol. V, No. 6, pp. 357-359.

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GERMANY

Dictatorship, the Communist Party, and the Working Class

THE Stresemann government has fallen. After several days of ministerial crisis, of only superficial significance compared with the profound social crisis through which Germany is passing, a Cabinet has been formed by Herr Marx (Catholic Centre Party). Herr Stresemann has been given the portfolio of Foreign Affairs. A sweeping Emergency Power Bill virtually liquidating constitutional rule in Germany was carried on December 8 (with Social-Democratic support) by 313 votes to 18.

Meanwhile, on November 23 at Dusseldorf, Stinnes and Krupp with other associated Ruhr industrial magnates at last signed the long-negotiated Ruhr agreement with the M.I.C.U.M. (Inter-allied Mission for Control of Factories and Mines), representative of the French industrialists. The demand for the ten-hour day is being vigorously pressed. The *Mittag*, a Stinnes Dusseldorf newspaper, in the course of an argument for a longer working day, observes that :—

> The mines to-day employ 550,000 workers, that is to say, 150,000 more than in 1913. As a result of the establishment of the eight-hour day, these 150,000 workers are a crushing burden on the mines of the Ruhr, and they must be got rid of in order to support the new burdens which the conditions laid down by the M.I.C.U.M. have imposed on the mineowners.

The misery of the German workers continues to increase. The attempt to stabilise the currency by the issue of the Rentenmark is a mere bluff. On all sides the tales of starvation and the consequent heavy mortality from diseases of all kinds are the same. They are accompanied by reports of intensive and brutal repression of the suffering and rebellious workers. This virtual White Terror has reached its height in Saxony and Thuringia : in the Reichstag session of November 23, the Social-Democratic Premiers of Saxony and Thuringia, Herren Frölich and Fellisch, exposed the "Black-and-Tan" excesses of the Reichswehr and entered a vigorous protest. Next day, *Vorwärts* suppressed their speeches entirely, though it gave fifty lines to the reply of Gessler, the Reichswehr minister.

Reports indicate that the Communist Party is still growing in numbers and influence, despite the regime of terror directed against it. This was especially illustrated after its formal suppression and outlawry on November 23, by decree of General Von Seeckt, the dictator of the Reich. This decree was of a most sweeping nature. It declared illegal all and every Party organisation and activity, it declared confiscated all property owned by the Party, it closed every Party office, printing press, &c. All members of the Party were declared outlaws, and also all persons who should give them aid or support in any way.

Yet on November 27, Berlin workers to the number of 60,000 took part in the demonstration of mass protest against the suppression of the Communist Party. In a similar demonstration in December 6, 30,000 workers took part. Further, it is reported that the illegal newspapers and broadsheets of the Communist Party in Berlin have an average daily circulation of 27,000

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copies. A representative bourgeois organ like the *Berliner Tageblatt* wrote apprehensively of Von Seeckt's decree:—

> Now, all Communist activity will be underground. Instead of the struggle between Social-Democrats and Communists the direct struggle between the Communist Party and the military power will commence. It is much to be feared that the action of General Von Seeckt will result in new accessions of strength to the Communist Party.

The struggle in the Social-Democratic Party between the right-wing officialdom and the left-wing opposition has again come to the fore. The Central Committee of the Party has associated itself with the bourgeoisie in the suppression of the Communist Party by formally refusing, once again, any united action with the Communist Party. But, as has been emphasised in these notes during the last three months, the Social-Democratic Party is a broken wreck of its former self, with a minimum of influence among the working class. It may be noted that, in the Reichstag fraction of the Party, the proposal to support the Emergeney Power Bill was only carried by 75 votes to 55.

At the Congress of the Saxon Social-Democratic Party, on December 2 and 3, the action of the Central Committee referred to above was repudiated, and a vote of censure on it and on the Reichstag fraction of the Party passed, by 109 votes to 20. A resolution demanding the use of all means in the struggle against military dictatorship and the state of siege was passed unanimously. In the election for the Saxon Executive of the Party the left-wing opposition secured a majority.

An extraordinary Congress of the Thuringian Social-Democratic Party arrived at similar decisions. It condemned all governmental coalition with the bourgeoisie and declared for a Social-Democratic cabinet with Communist support.

Similar left-wing agitation is reported in the Social-Democratic Parties of the Rhineland, Westphalia, and Bavaria.

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BOOK REVIEWS

A GOOD TEXTBOOK

An Outline of Economic Geography. Plebs Textbooks, No. 4. (Plebs League. 2s. 6d.)

IT is a pleasure to recognise a piece of work which is a real addition to the equipment of the workers. The object of any textbook is not simply to give information, of which heaven knows there is plenty about already in a confused form, but to help understanding. The test of a textbook is its stimulus to thinking. Its working-class character depends on the kind of thinking that it stimulates, *i.e.*, social thinking.

From this point of view the *Imperialism* textbook was open to criticism, because it presented very crowded information simply *in the order of information*, *i.e.*, British Imperialism, French Imperialism, German Imperialism, Italian Imperialism, in a way that could have very little living meaning to anyone to whom they did not possess a meaning already. It was open to severe criticism because this absence of living meaning meant in part a lack of class content which resulted in the social philosophy behind the book becoming a social philosophy of liberal Labourism.

The present textbook could easily be praised for its more skilled presentation of necessary information not otherwise readily available in a small space and an up-to-date form. The set-out is clear and easy. The tables at the end are both novel and useful. The maps and plans are undoubtedly in the first rank of this class of work, and are really beautiful little models of effective and economical presentment. In commercial value there is considerably more than a half-crown's worth in this book.

The value of this book, however, is not a question of technical skill: or rather, the technical skill is really a reflection of something else, and that is the thinking that it represents. The interest of this book is the character of freshness, of direct, personal, active thinking, and that thinking simply and unalloyedly social thinking, which it bears upon it. Here geography is translated into human society in development, with the successive phases of the River Valleys, the Inland Seas, the Ocean, and Railway Transport, and so to the modern position of the great World Groups of imperial rivalry with the advancing force of the international working class around Russia as the nucleus. The modern world is broken up from the static picture of States to dynamic forces in living movement. The chief object of any textbook is achieved in that the worker who reads it is pulled out of his individual consciousness of himself as a helpless unit in the limits of circumstance into social consciousness of himself as a living force in the full stream of development, united with the past and the future and with all the lands of the earth, and with a part to play.

It is this social conception, however incompletely achieved, that gives to this book its easier and more vivid presentation. The chapters represent ideas —social ideas. The tables at the end are not simply convenient summaries of information: they imply a guiding principle in their presentation of each Power Group with its Possessions, Virtual Possessions, Principal Sources of Raw

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Materials, Routes and Strategic Points, and Zones of Friction. The same with the maps and plans. Each map is not simply a map of a certain region of the earth's surface, even in economic terms: it is a map of a social relation—the economic unity of Canada and the United States, French spheres of influence in Europe in relation to coal, &c.

The treatment does not pretend to go beneath the surface. Particularly in the earlier portion, the relation of geographical conditions and class character is very lightly skimmed over, or the two are even treated as artificially separable. "The other fundamentally important factor in history, the struggle of classes, does not come directly within our scope in this book" (p. 21). This is an extraordinary statement to make in dealing with economic geography: and the failure to attempt to tackle this question of the relation of the two, which is admittedly difficult and still largely unexplored ground, deprives this book of the possibility of *permanent* value. The conscious limitation of view to a geographical "factor," to the exclusion of the class "factor," as if the two were mutually detachable, prevents that completeness of outlook which marks the classic.

Nevertheless, the work that is done here is a real stimulus to a fuller consciousness of human development and present events, and a good starting point for further thinking. It is to be hoped that it may be followed shortly by another textbook which will do the same work in more detail for Great Britain, and bring out the different character of the various areas in this country in relation to the notoriously different character and development of the working class in each.

R. P. D.

THE GREAT MAN

The Man of To-morrow: J. R. MacDonald. By "Iconoclast." (I.L.P. Publication Department, 3s. 6d., and Leonard Parsons, 8s. 6d.)

THIS book is a symptom of the inevitable. Once again a "great man" is needed and the process of manufacture has begun. A vein of adulation generally reserved for the biographies of millionaires and Press Trust magnates is tapped by an anonymous "Mr. Gossip" for the benefit of the Labour Movement. And the results of this research are published at a moment when the limelight of capitalist publicity is turned on to the future Prime Minister. Photographs of this "constructive" face (the phrase is "Iconoclast's") begin to appear in the popular illustrated papers. Powerful Sunday papers praise MacDonald's speeches during the election campaign as "worthy of all that is best in the tradition of British public life."

Why has this change, of which *The Man of To-morrow* is an important sign, occurred at this moment? The book, which is not a cheering book to read when the strength and weakness of the Labour Movement are remembered, provides the answer.

A litter of irrelevant material covers the meaning of the thing. Seven pages are devoted to his face (in this style: "It is a face that has weathered storms and kept straight on") and eleven pages are needed for an analysis of

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his shyness. Three or four times the fact is stressed that MacDonald's martyrdom during the war culminated in his expulsion from the Moray Golf Club. There is no need to deal with these examples of the art of social gossip. The thing that matters is this : every time that the reader emerges from the inept "write-up" of MacDonald's "sparkling eyes," his pleasantness ("I don't think we'd find Lenin agreeable"), and his love for "a romantic haze," one comes across MacDonald in one pose : that of the leader in the struggle against Communism. The reiterated emphasis given to this impression might puzzle the reader if it were not for the fact that MacDonald has himself described his own position (in the capitalist Press) as being "in the forefront of the fight against Communism."

This then is the need that governed the production of this book. A great man is needed to deal with the growing measure of real working-class revolt within the Labour movement. MacDonald is the man.

Such a great man always needs some factor in his career that will give him a grip on the imagination of the working classes. This MacDonald has. During the war he fought hard. He faced "a long and hopeless fight, foredoomed to defeat." He held meetings in every part of the country. His meetings were broken up. Ex-service men particularly have not forgotten this.

Armed with the loyalty that his efforts and his courage inspired and deserved, and that recent events have not yet completely shattered, he has gone on to a new fight. How completely this has dominated his attention during the last five years can be seen by a closer study of *The Man of To-morrow*.

On page 15 we learn—before the word Socialism has been mentioned, and as the first glimpse of MacDonald's political standpoint—that he "stood for parliamentary democracy against Sovietism, direct action, revolution." On page 35 a caricature of an undergraduate Communist is brought in as a foil to the MacDonald who "understands the English." On page 122 begins a long description of the "big controversy which arose to absorb much of his strength and energy." This controversy, between the adherents of the Third International and those of the Second, is stated to have "ultimately proved the means by which he at once saved and conquered the Labour Party."

MacDonald's "steady and finally triumphant opposition to the newest brand of Russian Marxism is worth the most careful study." It is difficult to disagree with this statement.

It is described how MacDonald, inside and outside the I.L.P., fought the Communists with the weapons of logic, history, and Socialism ; and it is emphasised that Communism "was not merely a domestic battle. It was, from 1918 on, the great issue in International Socialist politics." We learn later that, at the Berlin Conference, "in Radek, MacDonald had an opponent intellectually *if not morally* worthy of his steel . . . Radek is probably one of the cleverest men in Europe, but put mere cleverness against an intellect like MacDonald's, and it shivers like fine glass."

The chapter ends with a description of the dreadful things that might have happened to British Labour but for MacDonald's firm grip on fundamentals, his unwavering loyalty to principle.

There are too many such quotations to give more than a sketch of them. On page 186 the "controversies with Moscow" are mentioned again. On

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page 192 " you will find MacDonald there denouncing Communism." On page 210 there is a description of the Labour Party Conference of 1923, in which MacDonald is shown opposing the left-wingers ; his other achievements at the Conference are not mentioned.

Here is an opportunity to check our author's analysis. He finds MacDonald's opposition to the vigorously anti-imperialist attitude of the Barrow Labour Party the only episode worth mentioning from that crowded conference. Is he right ? Does that episode throw the clearest light on MacDonald ? In our opinion it does. Nothing could be more typical of the " truly great constitutionalist " than his reply to Barrow's criticism of the Parliamentary Labour Party's leanings towards Imperialism : " Barrow is represented by a Tory M.P. ! "

A page further on comes an example of MacDonald's lighter style : " The Communist is a politician in crinoline and corkscrew . . . I, being a modern creature, belive in Government rather than revolution or dictatorship."

To confine the statement of his position to a mere antagonism to Communism would not be to give the whole of the picture. Two sentences, which come together in a short list of his latest achievements, go far towards completing the portrait. " His intervention, first in the Building and later in the Agricultural dispute averted catastrophe. An invitation to dine at Buckingham Palace has given the highest sanction to his present rank and future claims."

The builders are making a great effort to recover the ground lost ; but it can scarcely help the agricultural labourers of Norfolk on 25s. a week or victimised for strike activity to read of the " highest sanction " being given to the rank and claims of a Socialist leader of the working-class movement.

In any period of stress and threat the bourgeoisie searches through its store of " great men." It turns in panic from a Kitchener proved wooden to a Lloyd George promising the " knock-out blow." After Ludendorff, Ebert. Behind Millerand, ex-Socialist, Briand, ex-Socialist, is held in reserve.

That is why Ramsay MacDonald's " special quality " is held up with the query, " Is it not that queer unanalysable thing called genius ? " That is why—and the gush has truth in it—" Lloyd George, so long the centre of Press interest, dropped out : MacDonald took his place." The Press has spoken and who shall deny it ? The Man is needed ; MacDonald is the Man.

T. H. W.

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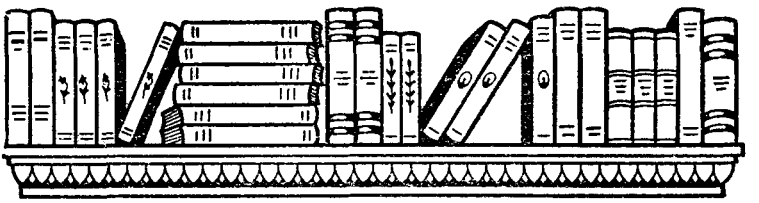

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